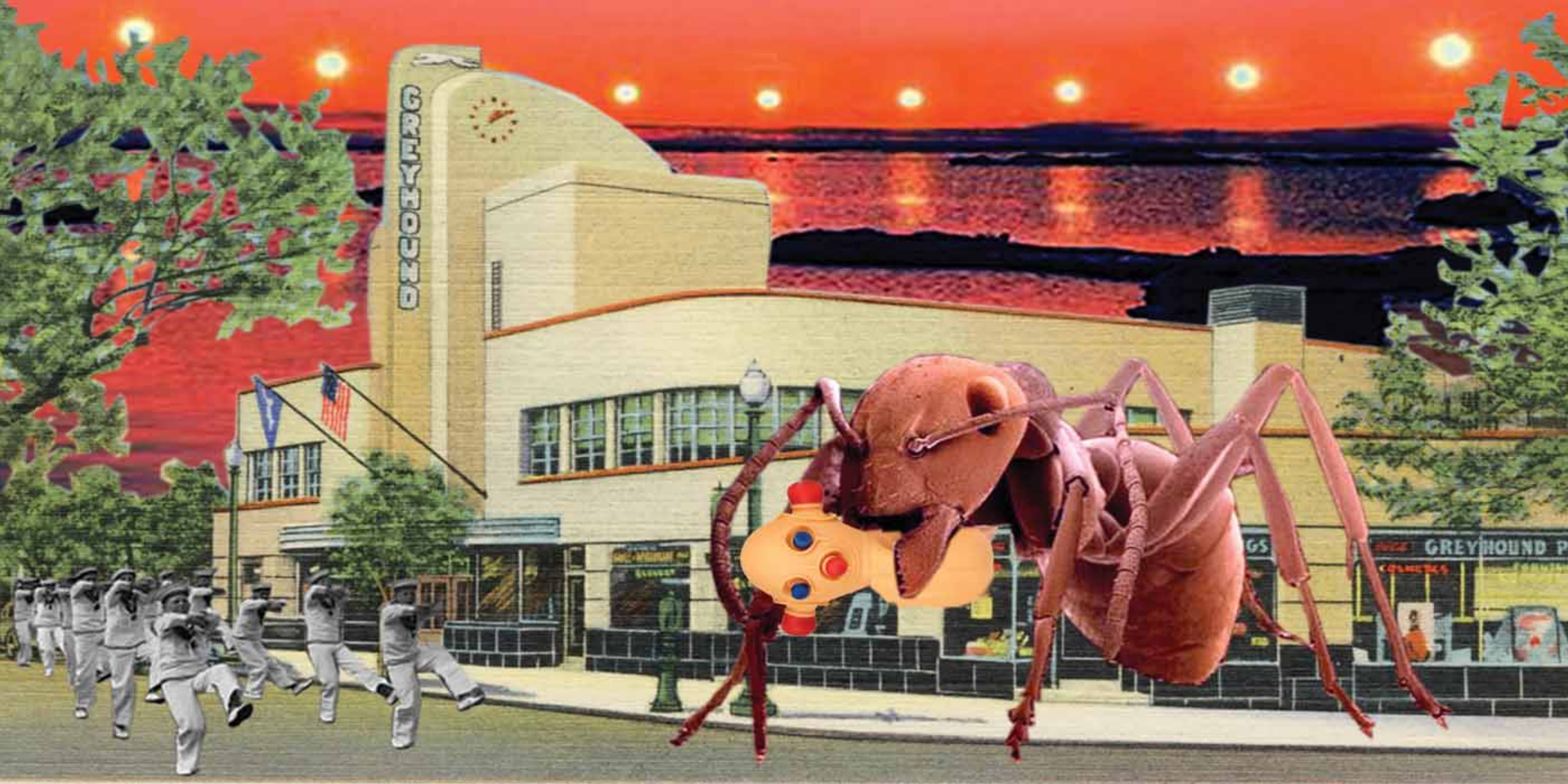


DREAMSCAPES

Dreams and Visions

Seth K. Deitch





I am in a room sitting at a table playing a game of jep-jep with an alien being. He isn't from outer space, but from another "realm" to hear him tell it. He is humanoid with covered in light green fur and has pointed ears. His eyes are like a goat's. His fingers have no nails and taper to highly mobile tips. He wears no clothing. the only light is a lamp above the table that only lights a circle around us. I cannot see the walls. Early on I am confident with the game even though it is complex. It is played on a wooden board that is tessellated with equilateral triangles. There is also a set of tetrahedral dice and a stack of cards. We roll the dice and move square markers from space to space on the board. As time goes on, my comprehension of the game diminishes. I am making stupid moves and playing wrong cards. My opponent rolls his eyes and then smirks. He had obviously hoped for more of a challenge. I realize that I am about to lose badly and that the consequences may be grave.



I was watching a television documentary about newly discovered creatures in the Antarctic. They included a beaver that was more fully aquatic. It was more like a seal, but its tail was its chief source of propulsion so it swam more like a whale.

There was a burrowing species of penguin. It was all gray with a short bill and tiny mole-like eyes. It was colonial and lived in huge warrens beneath the ice. They communicated with one another by speaking Spanish.



I am visiting a female friend in Miami. Miami seems to be a city of large wooden buildings and crowds. The natives are friendly, sun-tanned people who wear little clothing, sometimes none. She makes us lunch in her apartment which is in a huge high building overlooking the sea and she says we should go eat it on the ledge for the view. The ledge is no wider than 18 inches and has no guard rail. We are hundreds of feet above the waves crashing on a rocky shore below. I am terrified, but I can see for quite a way along the ledge and the various ledges above and below us that many people are doing likewise. My friend sees that I am afraid and asks if I would rather eat inside. I decide to stick it out.

Later we are walking along a street. A tiny woman attaches herself to us. She is very short appearing to have almost no torso save for a couple of oddly shaped lemon sized breasts. Her legs and arms are only a couple of inches long. She chatters annoyingly about obvious and mundane things until we finally are able to ditch her somewhere.

Again I am taken to some massive wooden building filled with nearly naked people sitting on ledges, this time hundreds of feet above a rock-filled ravine. I freak out and have to get off of there immediately. I am moving as quickly as I can toward a stairway at the end of the ledge almost knocking other people off their perches as I go incurring complaints the whole time. I finally get down next to an old lady in a blue one piece swimsuit. She says "Nobody likes those ledges."



I am younger, maybe in my late '20s. I am going over to this young woman's house to help her with something I don't remember what it is. She is attractive, but I have no sexual agenda with her although I wonder why not. She lives with her father and younger sister. I am there until late and she tells me I can sleep there for the night. I agree even though getting home on the bus will make me late for everything the next day.

Her cats worship her and are competing with one another for her favor. One shows up at a window with a dead bird and lays it down for her to see. The other comes to a different window with a rat and places it before her. The other cat, not to be out done, goads a mother mouse and her litter up to her and then forces the mother mouse to kill her own babies. The woman finds this behavior cute while I am horrified.

To get to the bathroom in the middle of the night I have to walk through a busy shopping mall which I do naked but wrapped in a sheet. I have to go a couple of times and both times I run into someone I know who wants to go for beers or coffee.

In the morning I am heading home on the bus. I am at a lunch counter with the people I was riding the bus with trying to play an electric guitar that for some reason uses very tiny micro jacks and keeps giving me shocks. We are all back on the bus and singing a song in a foreign language I don't understand.



I dressed in layers for a cold winter day even though it was warm and spring like. I put my portfolio in a briefcase and set out for Harvard square. The bus dropped me off somewhere unfamiliar, a big, brightly lit bus terminal, but I thought I was in the right place. I stepped outside and there were enormous trucks in the street easily twice as big as any I had seen before and they moved fast. I was in awe of them but not afraid. I said to one guy "Man, that's a huge freakin' truck!", but he seemed unimpressed. Looking around, I saw that the area had some aspects of Harvard square, but not others.

This was around the time that I realized I was dreaming. I just sort of made note of the fact and then forgot about it. I can't remember what my destination was in the dream, maybe I didn't have one and it didn't matter because the landscape was becoming increasingly unfamiliar. There were little gullies everywhere that had thick colored fluid running through them that looked like paint.

I climbed up a hill to a very modern looking building. There was a wide stream of yellow paint running down the hill beside me. I saw through a glass door, a thin man in a speedo doing some sort of stretching exercises. I tapped on it and he opened up. I asked for directions, but he didn't want to talk to me. He wouldn't let me in to make a phone call. I didn't know who I wanted to call anyway. At this point I realized that I had left my briefcase on the bus and started to panic. Again I remembered that I was having a dream and that it didn't matter. I was climbing up a wall that had green paint cascading down around me. I looked down and saw the entire landscape was crisscrossed with rivers of paint.

I decided to wake up



I am in a tiny primitive spacecraft barely worthy of the name like a Vostok or a Mercury capsule. The space I occupy is impossibly small and tight like a coffin. There is a single lever like a joy stick that controls the attitude of the capsule and a red button that will fire the main engine if I press it and it will do it only once. If I fire at the wrong time it will be worse than useless. There is a single round window about six inches in diameter. Through it I can see that I am much farther above the Earth than I expect to be. The planet looks about the size of a basketball so I estimate that I must be about halfway to the Moon. I know I could rotate the capsule to see if I could spot the Moon for a better estimate, but I'm afraid to touch anything. It is mostly the night side of Earth, dark with the lights of cities and only about a fifth of it in daylight. That portion is simply blue ocean and white clouds. No identifiable land. I can tell that I am weightless because my arms hang in the air above the armrests by a few inches when at rest, but save for my arms I am tightly strapped into my seat so I do not float freely, not that it would make much difference as the walls of the cabin are just inches away. The wall of the cabin is uninteresting, the tiny instrument panel with button and joy stick and a couple of meters that don't tell me anything useful. A cable runs up the wall secured with clips. The rest is just bare riveted steel painted a deep olive green. There is a radio voice quacking through the static in my helmet, but I cannot understand it. It is either a foreign language or simply too distorted to understand at first, but it becomes a scratchy record of Caruso singing an aria.



I'm in Paris attempting to convince Andy Kaufman to return to the United States to do a Christmas special. Amy Schumer has tagged along to "help". She is witty and nice enough and it seems like there is a decent chance I might have sex with her, but I don't get the impression that she really has much appreciation of or even really understands Kaufman's work. I tell her that it isn't a cardinal sin, not a lot of people do.

We meet with Andy in a sidewalk cafe. He has shown up dressed as a 1910s Apache and has a little mustache. He is skeptical of the idea that America would want him back to do this. He looks at Amy. "Who is this? Do you want me to fight her?" I laugh and say no. Amy just looks perplexed. It becomes apparent that in her mind she had somehow confused him with Jerry Lewis.

I finally convince him and he accepts a plane ticket which I stuff into the collar of his shirt. Amy has gone shopping and has returned with a new winter coat that still has tags hanging off of it.

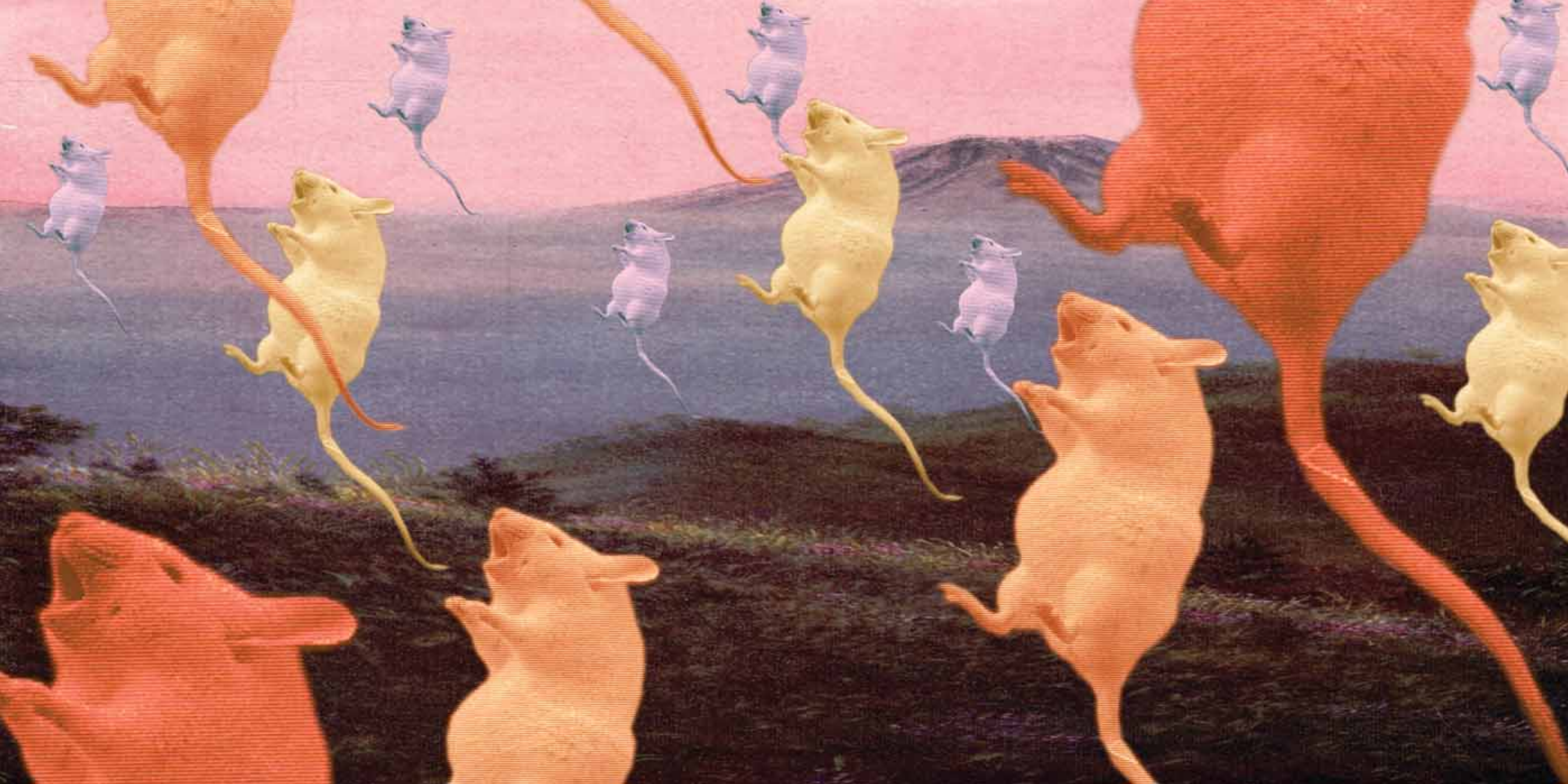


I have an unexplained room mate, male in his thirties. He's a big fellow and seems kind of angry, but not with me in particular, just one of these mad at the world types. We don't have much in common, but we watch a lot of TV together. The apartment has gotten larger like the original floor plan is now contained in a larger space, like it was set up in a warehouse or something so now the windows look out into a larger interior space.

The larger space becomes furnished over time. The room mate has a girlfriend who also lives there. She is a redhead and she cries a lot, kind of a drama queen. She has a lot of pointless fights with the guy followed by loud make up sex. She cooks weird food, like in the pan will be a simmering mass of stew or soup or something but there will also be these chunks of vegetables that will act as platforms to raise another vegetable or a piece of meat above the rest of it. At one point she has made a pea soup that has complete full sized limes in it. She is not the most competent in the kitchen. I come in to find her covered in some spice or another or flour and there are band aids on her fingers from the many times she has cut herself. I ask her about the limes in the soup. She says "Well, I'll tell you...."

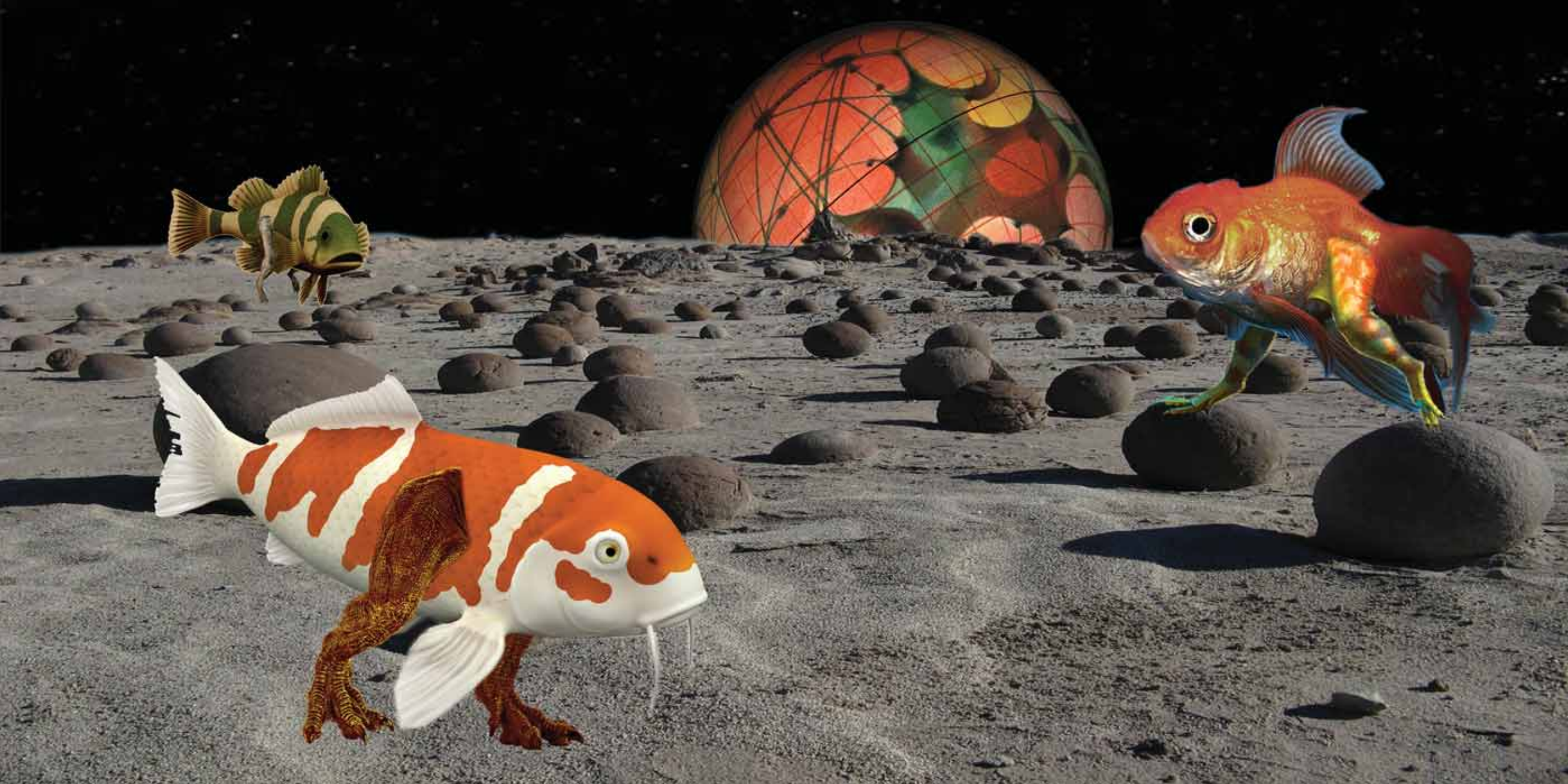
Suddenly I am outside of the building walking toward where I know the elevator is. I am surprised and slightly frightened to see a huge vulture standing there waiting for the elevator. I realize it is actually a man in a vulture costume.

I wake up.



I have had a surgical procedure that has removed my brain from my body and now my brain runs my body remotely from a box in the bathroom. I have some strange mental powers and I believe that I had them before this was done to me. I had a remote version of my hands that were huge and could operate at a distance. Sometimes they seemed to be invisible force fields and other times they were great mechanical contrivances. For some reason I keep trying things that would kill my brain, like detach power from it or dismantle parts of its containment, but I always realize that what I'm doing will result in my death and stop at the last minute. I don't know what is compelling me to keep doing this.

I was sent on a mission to New York City, but I had no idea what my mission was. The people at the hotel kept asking me what my itinerary was and I couldn't tell them because I didn't know. My brain was installed in the bathroom of my hotel suite when I arrived. I had no idea how or by whom it had been placed there. For some reason I had to help my brother escape from jail. He was accused of an unspeakable crime. That is how people referred to it, not in a specific way, just as an unspeakable crime. My alarm went off before anything else happened.



I'm in a book department in a large department store. It is sort of like the the one my mother worked in during the '60s at Macy's in White Plains. There is a woman working there who I find very attractive. Jet black hair, blue eyes, excellent curvy figure. I attempt to flirt with her, but all she is with me is polite and slightly impatient. I am buying a lot of books to keep her attention. I finally purchase a huge hardback comic book. It is really quite large, like three by four feet or something. It's not even something I like. Archie or some shit. Maybe Baby Huey. Crap in any case, but it makes me look like a big spender. The effect is nil and she still looks right through me. I go away dejected with my giant comic book.

I'm at a coffee shop and I am trying to find a place to put the giant book while I have a donut and some coffee. If I turn it sideways it will just barely fit under the counter in front of my legs. I realize that there is a guy sitting next to me who also has a gigantic comic book stuck under the counter. We look at each other's book and then at each other before we both look away in total embarrassment knowing that we both have the same story.



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